2; Skreferud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

796 [782] [539] be no spells, no enchantments, no loss, no waste, no quarrel, no dispute, may they dance with joy, enjoy themselves, Lord Father, my Ṭhakur.

Thereupon he sacrifices the speckled fowl. In the same way he sacrifices to all the bongas. Having cooked the fowls with rice into a hash, all the men of the village eat them. And the collected beer they drink there. All the people of the village, poor and others, then ask each other: Well, how is it? Perhaps some among us have a fever or are ill? If this is the case, we must let each other know. The village men then answer: We are well, Father headman, by your grace. The village headman then says: By the grace of Ṭhakur we shall all get what is good. As we see, we have brought the Sohrae festival, the great Kider Sister has arrived. For five days and five nights dance and enjoy yourselves, brothers and sisters; let there be no disputes, no quarrels, no covetousness, no greed; if there is any covetousness and greed, look out well, also the fenced vegetables you may pluck, but not what is climbing on poles, nor what is shrivelled up, pluck what is unripe; and the flowers that they have fixed with latha, have tied with thread, do not commit the sin of plucking these flowers for us, Sirs. The village men then answer: With twelve balls of cotton we are shutting our ears up; then whatever there may be, small or big, we shall not see or listen to it[12]. Thereupon they sing[13]:

[539]

Who created	Ṭhakur created	Ṭirmuṭi created
The wide earth?	The wide world.	Kanu the Goala.
Who created	Ṭhakur created	Towards the East he drove
The cattle, you there?	The cattle, you there.	The cattle, you there.
Who created	Ṭhakur created	Towards the East he drove
The cattle?	The cattle.	The cattle.

Where, young man, did you lose	On the road I lost
The flute at your waist?	The flute at my waist.
Where, young man, did you lose	At the place of worship I lost
The cattle, you there?	The cattle, you there.
Where, young man, did you lose	At the place of worship I lost
The cattle?	The cattle.

Thereupon they call the cattle-herd boys: Come with them, fellows, bring the cattle, we shall let them trample on the magic square and blot it out. They then drive the cattle near to the magic square. The village priest now asks for all the sticks of the cattle-herds;

[834]

[12] The expressions used all refer to women; they must not touch those who are too young or too old, and not married ones. It is shameless. [13] In a kind of Bihari.

3r Mukherjea O. V-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

valent Hindu forms. Many of the ceremonials as the application of vermilion to the bride's forehead, have been traced directly to Hindu influences. This *sindur dan* or *sindrà dan* is a remnant of the primitive custom of mixing the blood of the husband and wife, which they either drank or daubed themselves with, as a symbol of an eternal union. As it is a queer problem to discover whether the egg came first or the hen was first, ethnologists have in their turn, traced Dravidian influences in the custom. Similarly, the marriage with a *mòhua* tree, the race of the husband and wife while at the ceremony, called *Kado ghata*, have their parallel in the customs of the Hindus of the Central belt.

II. LOVE MARRIAGE

(1) Raja Raji

The freedom of social intercourse that the Santals allow to their boys and girls, naturally leads to many love-marriages; but the Santals, even when in love, have to go through certain formalities before living as man and wife. So we see that when a couple feel the urge for matrimony, they go to the house of the village Headman and inform him of their desire. The Headman now will take them to the house of the lover and there, in the presence of the village elders, the beloved is asked

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

584 and about twenty percent result from love or capture.

593 The average Santal remains madly in love with his wife for about two years after the marriage, thereafter, his ardour cools. With children, the world of reality makes its existence felt.

584 [607] [603] Lead in courtship is also taken by the woman. In such cases she requisitions the services of her obliging sister-in-law or grandmother, who conveys the message of love. The woman does not send presents to win over the man of her choice. Further 833 enquiry regarding the point if lead in coitus is taken by women, revealed that sometimes it happens like that. But should such news leak out, it becomes [558] a subject for jokes and the husband is thought as a worthless fellow, but nothing particular is thought 554 about the girl. The girl who forces her company 192 on men or belongs to many husbands is called a "dàri" by the Santals. The boy who likes the company of women rather too much is termed "Hiròm," and a flirt is called "Khilḍu". The licentious fellow, who cohabits with many women is censured as a "Caṇḍal."

152 • 834 We enquired to find out if the Santals are jealous by nature or not. It transpired that ordinarily the Santals do not suspect anything wrong if their women-folk talk or mix with other men on business or in course of social rounds. But human nature

B Mukherjea O, Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1952
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

being as it is, intimacy is never left unwatched and unquestioned. Their wives and daughters may dance with any Santal at day time, but at night no decent girl will dance except in the company of her father or husband It is only the flirt, the divorcee or the widow who dances unaccompanied by their elders. Some Santals asserted that wives should dance with their husbands only and never with others, but enquiry revealed that custom lays down no such strict injunction and married couples may dance together or with different partners, but there is the sane restriction that the husband must be present at the dancing-yard. It was stated that the husband and wife may suspect each other if either of them dances with others. So business, relationship and bonafides play their reasonable part in determining whether suspicion should attach to the movements of men and women and if the reasons why two persons of the opposite sexes are meeting together are clear, Santal men and women do not bother their heads with any jealous speculation.

Sexual freedom with the Santals has its own border-line. In course of the previous chapters we have seen that the unmarried boy and girl are sexually free, provided that they do not violate the laws of exogamy and prohibited degrees. So it happens that should a lad be found cohabiting, say, with five girls, he will be simply asked by his elders to make

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1932
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

224 782 In the alternative, the hunters may simply ask the Headman to invoke the Hill-god to look to the welfare of the tribe during the hunt.

224 834 784 As regards special rules to be observed before the hunting, it may be noted that men who will hunt, sleep separately from their wives and do not have sexual intercourse on the night previous to the hunting. On the day fixed for the excursion, the hunters do not apply oil on their heads or eat meat or fish or come in contact with women who have menstruated whose very touch is thought to defile the food or the clothes of the hunters.

224 [515] When the hunting party returns to the village, the feet of the hunters are washed with great delight by the women and oil is rubbed on the tired legs. All these conclude with the customary [576] salutations called *lobor* and *do god*, the former being adopted by women who are superiors in age and relationship and the latter, being a prostration by the juniors.

224 593 533 539 We would like to conclude this short review with a folk-song which describes the agony of a Santal wife while her husband is out hunting:

Baba hak najòmcò.
Baba sòbòd na jòmcò.
Baba lota dak' dògo sepeindaramlet.
Bàhu nalòmraga, bàhu nalòmhòmòra,
Bàhu hòpòn badal go bàhu hòpòn menak'ko.

4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

778 the last is a Mowah tree; on its foot a stone representing the deity *Gosain Era* is kept. This is the most important one and is known as Lady of the Grove.

796 241 In the Santal villages there is a succession of festivals throughout the year, nearly all connected with agricultural operations. The chief of these is the *Sohrae* or *Banda parab* or the harvest festival, celebrated in the Bengali month Pous (i.e., at the beginning of the month of January) after the rice crop of the year has been harvested. This festival generally lasts for five days. Previously there was no fixed date, villagers of one locality performing this festival one day, others performing on some other day. But now-a-days the [178] [211] Deputy Commissioner of the Santal Parganas fixes the date for this festival, and this date is proclaimed by a man with a *sal* branch in his hand in every *hut*. Before this *parab*, Santal women buy large earthen vessels and replace old ones which they bought in the previous year. When the day has been fixed all houses prepare "handia" (rice beer) and people invite their relatives. [793] [784] [834] [624] The night before the festival commences, the *Naike* is religiously-abstinent for before any sacrifice the sacrificer must not have relations with a woman and should sleep on the ground on a mat. At day break the *goddet* goes round and collects sacrificial fowls from every house. In the middle of the forenoon the *Naike* goes near a tank together with some of the [793] [782] village people, the *goddet* taking the fowls with him. The *Naike* bathes and then sacrifices the fowls to the different *bongas* after which the villagers cook the fowls with rice and eat them, and also drink rice beer. After this the villagers go to *Kulimucha* (i.e.,

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

over a wide field, involving inheritance, marriages and instances of indiscipline. Members are allowed to appeal against decisions made in village councils. Punishments inflicted range from outcasting to fines, and crude punishments are sometimes exacted on the spot, as in a case of a youth who had transgressed the rules of behaviour towards a woman relative with whom he was not in a joking relationship. He was compelled to drag his nose along a line of urine provided by the village headman whose authority had been flouted. The hearing of cases continues till the small hours of the morning and the discussions appear interminable, with accusation and counter-accusation, the calling of witnesses and references to tribal law and custom. It is, however, one of the great educating and cementing institutions in the life of the tribe. It is known to them by the name of "high court", a name that has been naturalized in most Indian languages. It is also called the *sendra dupup'*, the hunt sitting, and the *lo bir dupup'*, the burnt forest sitting, the latter name being due to the fact that the hunt takes place when the undergrowth in the forest has been burnt to help the fertilizing of the soil.

Meanwhile, when the evening meal is over the young men gather in another part of the clearing and spend the night in revelry. There is much strong liquor in evidence. In some cases the place of meeting has become the site of a government liquor shop. The dances, of a class known as *doïgey*, are men's dances, and the songs, known as *bir*, or forest songs, are men's songs. They are frankly coarse and deal largely with the physical aspects of love, courtship and lust. Many of the songs that are sung on this night are never sung by the Santals in any mixed company, or, indeed, at any other time, a fact that indicates among them a standard of delicacy in sexual behaviour which certain modern schools of thought appear at times to deny to primitive people.

Towards morning some of the folk, young and old, rest for an hour or two of much-needed sleep, but when the sun has risen they take some breakfast and begin to disperse. They make their way to their own villages, hunting as they go; but on this second day the proceedings are apt to be unexciting, for they do not find much to kill. By late afternoon the men are home again with their spoils, and when these have been divided they work off their fatigue in sleep.

The supposed monotony of the struggle for a livelihood is broken by so many devices of nature and of man that it is

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

a portion of land in recognition of his appointment, and land cannot easily pass out of the possession of a particular clan. The office therefore tends to remain in the family, for fresh lands are not obtainable after one or two generations have passed away.

The villagers recognize the priest's office, as they do those of the other dignitaries, by payment in return for services rendered. When one of the villagers is fined by the council, the priest receives his own share of the total sum. When game is killed in the hunt, the priest's share consists of a strip of flesh cut from the animal's backbone; it is formed into the shape of a cooking-place before it is handed over to him. He receives the heads of all the animals that are sacrificed by him on behalf of his fellow villagers. His duty is to make the offerings to the tribal spirits on behalf of the whole village at the time of the festivals. In order to prepare himself he has to separate himself from his fellows. Santals ordinarily sleep on string beds, but on the night before a sacrifice the priest sleeps on the floor, and he must abstain from sexual intercourse. On the morrow he has to fast until his work is done.

In addition to the priest, there is in every village a co-priest with special functions. This official is known as the *kudam nacke*. The word *kudam* refers to the area behind the dwelling-house. During village festivals, while the priest is making the main offerings, the *kudam nacke* sacrifices to the *pargana boiga*, the spirit who is regarded as the guardian or perhaps as the personification of the wider territorial unit into which groups of Santal villages are formed. It may be that this particular spirit needs the services of the co-priest because the *pargana boiga* was resident in the area before the villagers settled within its borders, while they brought the other spirits with them. The other function fulfilled by the *kudam nacke* reveals ideas which comprise perhaps a separate strata in the complex structure of Santal religion. During the festivals he offers drops of blood, which he produces by pricking his own arm with a thorn, to the boundary spirits, or the spirits of the outskirts of the forests. The name of this blood offering is *bul mayam*, *mayam* being the ordinary word for blood. The meaning of the term *bul* in this context is obscure, and Santals are unable to offer any explanation. *Bul* is a word connoting drunkenness; it can also be used as an adjective to describe an earthen pot that has become saturated with water, and it may refer to the saturation of the rice offering with the blood. In some incantations the phrase is coupled with one that refers to menstrual blood. The same